

Message Text

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70

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 CPR-01

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R 211400Z RAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY SANA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7173

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

C O N F I E R E N T I A L SANA 0210

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT

SUBJECT: CABINET CHANGE, OTHER APPOINTMENTS IN YAR

1. ON JAN 15 MININDB DAMASH WAS REPLACED BY YAHYA AL-ARASHI, WHO HAS BACKGROUND IN MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND, SINCE DEC 1974, WAS HEAD OF INDEPENDENT CENTRAL OFFICE OF ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT, WHICH REPORTED DIRECTLY TO PRIMIN. ARASHI SUCCESS IS ESSENTIALLY TECHNICAL MATTERS IS INTERESTING BECAUSE HE HAS ONLY SECONDARY SCHOOL CERTIFICATE, AND NO UNIVERSITY TRAINING. AL-ASASHI NOT WELL-KNOWN TO AMERICAN OFFICIALS, BUT HAS REPUTATION AS FIRM ADMINISTRATOR, HONEST MAN, POLITICAL NEUTER AND RISRJG FIGURE.

2. DAMASH ALSO HAS IN EFFECT LOST HIS OTHER JOB, AS HEAD OF SUPREME REFORM COMMITTEE. HE RETAINS THE TITLE, AND AS CLOSE FRIEND AND LOYAL SUPPORTER OF PRESIDENT HAMDI, DAHMASH IS NOT LIKELY TO BE DUMPED UNCEREMONIOUSLY. HOWEVER, PRIME MIN ABDAL AZIZ ABD AL-GHANI HAS INCREASINGLY CIRCUMSCRIBED THE WORK OF THE REFORM COMMITTEE WHICH BEGAN WITH GREAT PUBLICITY SEVERAL MONTHS AGO WITH AUTHORITY TO CALL INTO QUESTION EVERY MINISTER AND ACTIVITY. (SANA 2918). THE FIRST AND ONLY MAJOR ACT OF THE COMMITTEE

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WAS TO DISESTABLISH THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION. SINCE THEN ABDAL AZIZ ABD AL-GHANI HAS QUITELY MOVED TO TAKE OVER MUCH OF INVESTIGATORY AND REFORM WORK WHICH COMMITTEE WAS SUPPOSED TO DO AND ON 21 JANUARY IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION HAD BEEN RE-ESTABLISHED, UNDER THE PRIMIN, UNDER AHMED HASSAN SABR, WHO WOULD HAVE THE RANK OF MINISTER.

3. SABR IS A GRADUATE OF AL-AZHAR IN CAIRO (SHARIA LAW). HE HAS AN MA IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND HAS ATTENDED TRAINING COURSES IN FRANCE (INCLUDING TRAINING IN THE FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTRY) AND IN UNESCO. HE HAS SERVED IN YEMEN MOSTLY IN EDUCATION POSTS (DIRECTOR GENERAL OF EDUCATION FOR THE SANA GOVERNORATE (1969-70) AND DIRGEN MINED FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (70-71) AND (UNTIL THE PRESENT) AND DIRGEN OF THE TEACHER TRAINING PROJECT.

4. ZAYD MUTIH DAMAJ, A SHEIKH WHO HAS MANAGED IS KNOWN CHIEFLY FOR HIS SUCCESS IN REMAINING A FRIEND OF BOTH ABDALLAH BIN HUSSAIN AND PRESIDENT HAMD, HAS BEEN MADE GOVERNOR OF MAHWIT, AND THE PREVIOUS GOVERNOR THERE (QADI MOHAMMAD ALD HAJI) HAS BEEN MADE ADVISOR TO THE PRIMIN FOR SHARIA AFFAIRS. THE PRIMIN HAS NEVER BEEN KNOWN TO WANT OR NEED SUCH ADVICE, AND IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE NEW JOB IS A WAY OF KEEPING A LOYAL BUT UNIMPORTANT MAN ON THE PAYROLL. DATE OF APPOINTMENTS: JAN 15.

5. ALSO ON THE JAN 15 LIST WAS ALI ABU RIJAL, THE VERY CAPABLE AND LONGTIME DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE MINPUBLIC WORKS. ABU RIJAL WAS MADE GOVERNOR OF SANA (HE WAS ALREADY HEAD OF THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD). THIS IS SURE TO BE A POPULAR CHOICE. ABU RIJAL IS AN ENGAGING MASTER OF CEREMONIES OF A LOCAL TELEVISION TALK SHOW-- COMPLETE WITH TURBAN, LONG SKIRT AND KNIFE AND A LEARNED HISTORIAN AND ETHNOLOGIST. ABU RIJAL IS ALSO FAMOUS FOR THE DISLIKE HE INSPIRED IN HIS MINISTERS OF PUBLIC WORKS, WHO WERE INVARIABLY LESS INDUSTRIOUS AND INTELLIGENT THAN HE. THE LATEST (ABDALLAH KHURSHUMI) REPORTEDLY REFUSED TO ENTER THE CONFIDENTIAL

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MINISTRY, WORKING INSTEAD OUT OF ANOTHER OFFICE IN THE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT. SCOTES

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NNN

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